

BY ALISON BAILIN BATZ



Dr. Tannehill of Arizona Breast Cancer Specialists in Gilbert

Making a Difference

GILBERT DAD SAVING ARIZONA MOMS

THE SOUTHEAST VALLEY can thank snow – yes, snow – for inspiring a local father to become a physician.

"As a teen I was an avid skier, but I couldn't afford lift tickets," said Dr. Scott Tannehill, a partner at Arizona Breast Cancer Specialists in Gilbert. "However, I discovered that I could ski free if I volunteered with the ski patrol."

The National Ski Patrol is a worldwide volunteer organization that provides first aid on the slopes. EMTs on skis, basically.

"Turns out, I liked the aiding part more than the skiing. That led to medical school," said Tannehill.

During his medical training, the challenges of understanding and fighting cancer drew his interest. He trained to become Board Certified in Radiation Oncology.



"Every cancer patient is special," Tannehill said. "Every diagnosis is a tragedy, regardless of the age or gender of the patient. But I saw certain cancers striking down mothers and daughters. Something about that drew me in. I wanted to help fight that."

Tannehill specialized in treating those cancers for years in academic practice before joining several colleagues to help create Arizona Breast Cancer Specialists, a radiation oncology practice specializing in breast cancer. Their third office opened in Gilbert in late 2010.

"We have state-of-the-art equipment. Our physicians have helped invent and disseminate techniques now used all over the world," said Tannehill. "Still, it is the dedication, judgment and experience of the doctors that most drive success in cancer treatment. We take the most pride in that facet of our practice."

Tannehill believes in treating each patient the way he would want his mother, wife, or daughter treated. As a father of a nine-year-old daughter, this really strikes home.

"Medicine is changing, and those changes leave less time for the physician to talk to – and listen to – the patient and family," said Tannehill. "Sometimes that part – the time – gets lost in the chaotic fog following a cancer diagnosis."

Eager to do more for the breast cancer community, Tannehill has volunteered with Arizona Institute for Breast Health (AIBH) since 2009. The organization offers breast cancer patients a second opinion, completely free of charge.

"These second opinions often involve several specialists simultaneously. It is one of the best services for breast cancer patients that I have ever seen," said Tannehill.

To date, AIBH has worked with thousands of women and their families – and not only to provide second opinions. In fact, it also provides free support, resources, fitness and nutrition, advice and more.

So, how does this busy Gilbert dad spend his free time?

While he still hits the slopes now and then, lately he has been talking to his daughter about her latest dream – being a doctor. **202**